

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 115

By Coley

A RESOLUTION to commend and honor Jane Allen Hawkins and the late Mac Hawkins for their valiant service to our country during World War II and to fondly recall their chance meeting following the Normandy invasion.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who risked their lives to take part in what has been described as the greatest invasion in military history – D-Day; and

WHEREAS, Jane Allen Hawkins and her late husband, Mac Hawkins, are two such estimable people who showed great courage, ability, and integrity during the Normandy invasion of World War II, she as an Army nurse with the 41<sup>st</sup> Evacuation Hospital that landed at Omaha Beach, and he as a soldier with the U.S. Army's Utah Beach assault; and

WHEREAS, it was happenstance that this young couple, who had married less than four months earlier while on leave in England, ran into each other while going about their duties after the invasion; and

WHEREAS, this chance encounter was captured on film and featured in the Army Times's historical Normandy invasion book, *D-Day, The Greatest Invasion*; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hawkins remembers the moment like it was yesterday, her crew was unloading equipment from a truck, while Mr. Hawkins, with a driver, was coming in from Utah Beach and recognized her truck; in the photo that captured their meeting, Mr. Hawkins is helping his new bride onto a convoy while their friends watch; and

WHEREAS, it wasn't until several months later that the Hawkins' saw each other again; Mrs. Hawkins recalls that they were so busy with their 24-hour jobs, they didn't have time to think about anything; and

WHEREAS, one of four children raised in the rural West Tennessee town of Trimble, Mrs. Hawkins had always felt a desire to help other people and answered the call to be a nurse early in life; and

WHEREAS, Jane Hawkins spent four years as a military nurse serving in England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany; she was awarded a Bronze Star for her meritorious service; and

WHEREAS, she recalls her unit sitting on the English Channel waiting to be unloaded during that historic day, the sounds of shelling and bombs going off, and the feeling of nervousness at the uncertainty of what lay ahead; once her crew landed, they spent the night on the beach with only tree branches for cover, and the following day set up a hospital; and

WHEREAS, after serving in the military, Jane Hawkins worked at a clinic in Starkville, Mississippi; she also worked with the American schools in Japan; and

WHEREAS, Mac Hawkins spent twenty years in the United States Army and retired as a lieutenant colonel; he eventually taught Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at Mississippi State University, and then worked as a counselor at Kingsbury High School; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hawkins still lives in the house in Bartlett where she and Mr. Hawkins, who passed away in 1995, raised three children; she enjoys going through her scrapbooks and D-Day-related memorabilia which serve as concrete testament to her memories of long ago; and

WHEREAS, Jane Allen Hawkins and the late Mac Hawkins leave behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all their chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of these exceptional public servants, courageous soldiers, and exemplary human beings; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that with our profound gratitude we commend Jane Allen Hawkins and the late Mac Hawkins for their outstanding courage and valorous service to their nation and to the cause of freedom during World War II, expressing our conviction that their life of service will stand as a model for future generations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we fondly honor the memory of that chance meeting between two newlyweds long ago which no doubt served as a beacon of hope, a return to normalcy – if for only five minutes - during a time of great upheaval in our world.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.